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For Immediate Release

Community Foundation of Collier County Receives \$13.6 Million in unrestricted funds from the estate of Wilfred and Joan Larson

Naples, FL (November 17, 2021) The Community Foundation of Collier County (CFCC) has received a \$13.6 million gift from the estate of Wilfred and Joan Larson through their WJL Charitable Remainder Unitrust. The Community Foundation established the Wilfred and Joan Larson Endowment Fund with these unrestricted funds to support the community needs the Larsons were passionate about in perpetuity.

CFCC has awarded over \$500,000 in grants to local nonprofits so far from the fund. Grants include \$10,000 to RCMA for their expansion to add 7th and 8th-grade classrooms to their Immokalee Community School, \$15,000 to Youth Haven to fund security enhancements such as cameras, phones, and gates to improve safety for at-risk youth, and \$10,000 to Grand Piano Series to bring world-class classical music performers to Southwest Florida for public concerts.

The Larson Fund will also benefit education for local students. \$50,000 was granted to both Champions For Learning and the Immokalee Foundation for Florida Prepaid scholarships. An additional \$50,000 will fund CFCC scholarships for secondary education technical and vocational training certificate programs.

Wilfred was a 28-year executive with Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, served as president of Bristol-Myers Products, and retired as president and CEO of Westwood-Squibb Pharmaceuticals. He and his wife Joan, Naples residents of 20 years, turned their lasting love for three communities into a remarkable legacy. They also bequeathed \$9.9 million to the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, where they lived in the 1990s, and another \$15.4 million to the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation in Michigan.

"Here's a couple who had homes in three communities over their lifespan, and they wanted to make sure each community would get part of their philanthropic dollars," said Community Foundation Collier County President/CEO Eileen Connolly-Keesler. "We talk about "give where you live," and this is a splendid example for other donors for giving here in Collier County and where they came from."

Photo caption: Wilfred and Joan Larson, courtesy of Alison K. Douglas, Esq., Cummings & Lockwood

About the Community Foundation of Collier County

The Community Foundation of Collier County, now in its 36th year, is a tax-exempt, public, charitable organization established in 1985 to increase and focus on local private philanthropy. Today, the Community Foundation of Collier County manages more than 850 funds, collaborates with hundreds of nonprofits, holds over \$276.6 million in assets and has distributed over \$229.5 million in grants to nonprofit organizations and community programs. The Community Foundation of Collier County is one of Florida's fastest-growing community foundations. For good. Forever. Learn more at cfcollier.org or call 239-649-5000.